

Reply to Office Action of September 14, 2007

REMARKS

The Examiner's comments from the Office Action mailed September 14, 2007 have been carefully considered. In this Amendment and Response, claim 8 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and the subject matter of claim 8 has been incorporated into claim 7. Claim 24 has been newly added. Accordingly, claims 1-7, 9, and 24 are pending in the application. Amendments have been made to claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 9. Support for these changes can be found throughout the specification and figures. No new matter has been added.

Reexamination and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,165,195 to Wilson et al. (hereinafter "Wilson"). Claim 8 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection with respect to claim 8 moot. With respect to claims 1-7 and 9, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, advancing a flexible side sheath over a branch guidewire, wherein a distal end portion of the flexible side sheath advances into the branch vessel. The flexible side sheath is advanced into the branch vessel subsequent to a branch guidewire being advanced through the flexible side sheath and into the branch vessel.

Wilson does not disclose or suggest advancing a distal end portion of a flexible side sheath into a branch vessel subsequent to advancing a branch guidewire through the flexible side sheath and into the branch vessel. Rather, as shown in FIGS. 13A-13E, the branch guidewire 56, and not the guidewire lumen 55, is advanced into the branch vessel 5. The main catheter 50 is then advanced distally into the main vessel until resistance is felt from the branch guidewire 56 pushing against the ostium of the branch vessel 5. See column 16, lines 58-65 and FIGS. 13A-13E. No reason is provided in Wilson or elsewhere to advance the guidewire lumen 55 of Wilson into the branch vessel 5.

For at least these reasons, Wilson does not anticipate claim 1. Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-6 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Claim 7 recites, in part, advancing the flexible side sheath over the branch guidewire, wherein the distal end portion of the flexible side sheath advances into the branch vessel. The flexible side sheath is advanced into the branch vessel subsequent to a branch guidewire being advanced through the flexible side sheath and into the branch vessel.

As discussed above with respect to claim 1, Wilson does not disclose or suggest advancing a distal end portion of a flexible side sheath into a branch vessel subsequent to advancing a branch guidewire through the flexible side sheath and into the branch vessel.

For at least these reasons, Wilson does not anticipate claim 7. Claim 9 depends from claim 7 and is allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 7 and 9 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

New Claim

Claim 24 has been newly added. To the extent the above rejections apply to new claim 24, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claim 24 depends from claim 1 and is allowable over Wilson for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Examination and allowance of claim 24 are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance. If a phone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues related to this matter, please contact Applicant attorney listed below at 612.371.5387.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0903
612/332-5300

23552

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: March 14, 2008

/Joshua N. Randall/

Joshua N. Randall

Reg. No. 50,719

JNR/JKS